A STUDY OF REALITY.

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## PREFACE.

Metaphysics is not popular. There are no doubt many popular treatises on metaphysical subjects. But unfortunately they do not set out the Indian way of thinking. They are written from the stand-point of western thought and by western writers. They are excellent in their way and treat many problems with subtlety. But they do not satisfy the metaphysical instinct of the Indian. This booklet has been written especially with the object of meeting that demand.

Metaphysics is said to be the science of sciences. Those who go through this booklet will have no doubt that it has a very definite meaning for us. It is the science of the soul or the self. This is an ancient science, evolved when the minds of men were not distracted by the progress of other sciences, and they were more alive to the deeper meaning of life and to the inner significance of things generally. I do not presume to have made any study worth the name of the ancient sanskrit literature bearing upon this subject. My only qualification for writing upon it is that I have an interest in the subject which is rather unusual in these

days, and because I believe that my presentation of it might appeal to a larger section of people educated in the present-day public schools and universities than any coming either from the orthodox pandits and sastries or from orientalists. I am a student of metaphysics pure and simple, and the only appeal I know is the appeal of reason. I submit the following few pages with the object of indicating that appeal, and not to explain an ancient system. I have also taken care to make as little use of the technicalities of current metaphysics as possible, so that the average reader may not find himself lost in the useless intricacies of mere phrases, and may get directly at the meaning.

The only debt I have to acknowledge is the debt to my teacher, Seth Motilal Maneckchand, who first initiated me to this way of thinking, and who has always found time, through his arduous duties, to keep me in touch with this thought. The original draft was in greater part first communicated to him, and many valuable suggestions from him have been incorporated.

G. R. M.

*March 18, 1927.*

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## CHAPTER I.

### REALITY AND SELF.

"Something is real". This is a proposition the truth of which cannot be doubted. Scepticism can be carried far; but it can never be carried to the point where at least the sceptical affirmation that nothing may after all be real would not be true, and so in a measure have that reality which is denied by it to other things. The sceptic believes something; and in that belief he contradicts himself. A consistent sceptic should believe nothing and affirm nothing. But then such a sceptic would not be a psychic entity and we cannot count with him.

Further, the assertion that "nothing may be real" can only be signifi-

cant on the ground that reality has a certain characteristic which anything falling within the sceptic's experience fails to justify. But if that be so, what is the justification for the sceptic's characterisation of reality? Reality can only be characterised when it is found. We cannot determine *ab initio* what reality should be like. We can only do that after we have known something to be real. And it is only by a rational interpretation of what is thus known that a true characterisation of reality can be obtained.

Something is real. But that something cannot exclude me. I should have a part in it. If it were exclusive of me, if I were not real, anything that the real might produce in me

as an effect would not indicate reality, and I should be without the means of saying what is real and what is not. That would be the end of philosophy, and in fact of all rational thinking. It is because I am real that I am actuated to real effects; and it is because of such effects that the reality of outside causes may be said to be inferred by me, and life itself becomes possible.

"I" must be real. But if I am real, anything to which I am actuated would only partake of the reality of myself; it would not be real apart from me. What I must then know to be real in being actuated is not the reality of something outside me that is inferred by me, but the reality of that in whose real states outside

causes are received and interpreted as those causes. That which is truly outside me is simply outside me; it is nothing to me. It is only that which participates in me that can so much as set up any semblance of reality *for me*. I then am not only *a* component of reality, but in a very important sense, the central fact of reality. Realitv would not be the reality it is but for the interpretation it receives from me; and this interpretation is entirely dependent upon the reality of myself.

Reality might have any characteristics. There is no set *apriori* rule by which I can determine those characteristics. But as I can never over-step my own reality in any attempt to interpret reality as a

whole, so neither can I conceive of characteristics which this reality has but are lacking in me. It is rather by an unconscious interpretation of my own reality that any characteristics of reality whatsoever are conceived. For I can get at the whole only through the reality of myself; and if I am deficient in any characteristics, the whole would to that extent be deficient also. It is only through my wholeness that any whole can be understood to be a whole. Myself am therefore *the way,* and the only way by which the knowledge of the real or of the whole may be obtained.

What now is the most important truth about myself? It is undoubtedly the fact that I am aware of

myself in a peculiarly direct way; the reality of myself is neither given in, nor inferred from, any of my so-called states; rather it is the presupposition of those states. Nothing else that I can know can have this nature. For what is not *my self* can only be known either as part of my states or as something inferred therefrom. And in any case its existence in relation to me can only be signified by a certain limitation of my psychic nature. It cannot *be* just as the self *is*, which latter, in the language of epistemology, can neither be confronted, nor projected, nor even ideated. The self is at the back of all psychic activity, and is therefore psychically unknowable; it cannot be limited just as any object of our consciousness.

This unknowability of it however does not signify the lack of any real knowledge about it. Rather we know the self so much the more directly that we cannot describe what we know, or even to be aware after a great amount of misdirected effort that we know anything of the sort at all. We never however doubt the reality of our self. And if we analysed correctly what we knew of it, we should know that we knew all about it,–that we knew the self wholly and as it is. Only our knowledge could not be put in the form of a subject-object relation.

We know the self directly; and yet this knowledge is not without its peculiar complications. So long as there is psychic activity, we may be

said to have a sense of our being, and in that sense to know our self. When psychic activity ceases however, we seem to lose all consciousness of our being. If now, as we have said, the self is not known in or through any of our states, why should we miss it altogether when we are psychically quiescent?

It is true that we do in a sense lose all consciousness of the self at times. But have we, in our knowledge, any equivalent of this loss? Do we ever know that we have ceased to be self-conscious, or that we are without our self? It is evident that we do not have this knowledge, and that by the very nature of the case it is impossible of realisation. If we really lose self-consciousness, there wo-

uld be no consciousness, and no one that could know the loss. How then do we affirm that we lose consciousness of the self? Evidently, it is only when we are fully self-aware that we make the statement and the statement is significant; but then there is no loss of self-consciousness that we could know.

It might now be argued that we do not indeed know the fact of this loss when we have actually ceased to be self-conscious. But that does not prevent our knowing it later when consciousness has returned. And as a matter of fact we do know somehow that in sleep and other similar states there is no consciousness of self, and no self in the common usage of that term.

We do not ourselves deny the fact of this knowledge. But it is interesting to raise the question of its possibility. We know when we are fully self–aware that we had lost all self–awareness in sleep. How was the fact noted, and who noted it? The self could not have noted it, for it was, according to its own declaration, psychically quiescent. We may no doubt suppose that the self, although quiescent, continued to have being. But being that is devoid of the power of consciousness would be, for our purposes, quite useless. It could note nothing. It would be the being just as that of a stone, and a stone is never cited to prove the possibility of knowledge. The truth is that the existence of the self can-

not be divorced from its consciousness, and where the latter is absent the self must be supposed to be absent also. And yet if the self is absent, the knowledge of this absence is an impossibility. We have this knowledge; and that requires explanation.

The only explanation that appears to us to be feasible is that real self-consciousness is never lost. It appears to be lost because we confound it with what is only a part of psychical movement. This movement we know, and also that it begins and it ends,–it comes on a stage so to say, and then disappears from it. We could not know this if we did not possess ourselves all the while, and in possessing ourselves knew ourselves. Our existence is not temporal nor is

our self-knowledge. The self is truly out of time, and the knowledge of it is identical with its being. The self does not come with psychical life and disappear with it. If that were so, if the self had merely a psychical existence, it would not be possible to have the awareness that it had ceased to be self-aware at any time. It is the non-psychical and yet intelligent existence of the self that alone explains the possibility of the awareness in question. We are; and we may be said to know ourselves whether we know it or not. What can be nearer to us or more intelligible than the intelligent being with which we know everything on earth or in heaven, and even our own states of conscious and unconscious

being? And hat could be more enduring than that reality any break in whose existence would never be known, for such a knowledge would contradict itself? The real passing away of the self can never be known, and can never therefore be intelligently posited.

The only direct intuition of being we have is the intuition of our self. Everything else is known only in its passing states, and is real only as it forms part of or is inferred from those states. There can be no intuition of "being" different from the self; for all intuition is necessarily dependent upon self-intuition. Being that is different from the self must therefore be never intuited; and what is never intuited has no being.

Our very first analysis of reality thus brings us to its true ground, the self. There can be no reality apart from it. What appears to be real so, is real only for the self and in it. The self on the other hand is not known by anyone and does not form part of anyone's state. It is not an object of knowledge, but knowledge itself so to say; for its being is not distinct from what may be called the true knowledge of it. We know the self as we can know nothing else; and yet because of a false tendency to interpret all knowledge in terms of subject-object relation, we seem, of all things, to be unaware of our self. The truth however is that we know the self, and there is nothing that we can *oppose* to it as different

in being. What we may *oppose* has first to be reduced to a phase in conscious life, and that does not make for real opposition to the ground of all consciousness, the self.

## CHAPTER. II

### THE CONCEPT OF UNREALITY.

We have shown in the previous chapter that not only is the self the central fact of reality, but that it also constitutes the only direct intuition of being as such. This however will not satisfy those who doubt that there is any intuition of self such as we would have them believe there is. They may argue that our awareness is restricted to what somehow forms part of our mental life; what does not form such a part is never known and can never be known. The intuition of what we call our self is the intuition of something psychical; and where psychical activity is altogether absent, there is no intuition of self.

William James long ago set forth the doctrine that thought is the only thinker. This is not the place to go into it. It suffices for our purpose to note that any psychical state of which we can ever be aware is as much objective to the intuition of self as the objects of what we call material universe. Still we do not want to rely wholly upon a form of argument involving direct appeal to individual experience. We therefore proceed to raise the more general question, what should be the characteristics of reality regarded in an impersonal way?

The most important characteristic of reality must evidently be its distinction from unreality. Now there is a form of argument according to which

nothing can be unreal; for anything, however absurd in conception, is real in some universe of discourse. But even this argument implies some characterisation of reality; and without such characterisation, it would not be possible to speak of the different universes of discourse as so many universes of the real. There must therefore be a sense in which reality, to begin with, must be distinguishable from unreality.

What now are we to understand by unreality? It might be thought that the concept is a very simple one, and that everybody knows what is to be understood by it. But that is not really the case. The concept of unreality is one of the most difficult to specify. It is often confounded

with notions from which it ought to be distinguished. It must, in our opinion, be distinguished first of all from the notion of "incompatibility in thought." The fourth angle of a triangle is said to be unreal. But this, as it appears to us, is a loose use of the term "unreal." "The fourth angle of a triangle" has the form of a single construct; but it has no more than the form. A triangle and a four-cornered figure are two distinct entities that have, so far as their properties are concerned, nothing in common. To credit the one with the properties of the other involves self-contradiction; and the unity thus constructed is not significant for thought, and thought is not led by it into regarding it for something

actual or even possible. The construct "the fourth angle of a triangle" is really spurious; it signifies nothing, and nothing is therefore indicated as unreal. The concept of unreality is more elusive than the cheap illustrations drawn from the contradictory in thought. The constructs here considered disappear before the very application of any process of proof; they disappear *on mere thought.*

The notion of unreality is next to be distinguished from that of "falsehood," or wilful invention. A, for example, makes a statement that B had delivered a lecture on Swaraj at a particular time and in a particular locality, when in fact B had not done so. Here A does not misread anything, misunderstand anything. He

simply has no evidence of any sort pointing to the fact he wants to affirm. What he does is to concoct a story and pass it on as true; and he is not deceived by it. Nothing is unreal for him, for nothing is truly signified as real by his original intention which fabricated the report in question. He knows for certain that B did not do what he is reporting him to have done. There is accordingly nothing in his experience which has even the appearance of a fact to which the predication of unreality may be referred. *What* is unreal then? The fact of B having delivered the lecture in question cannot be unreal, for it is never affirmed as fact by the only person to whom its unreality may be said to be intelligible.

Something is known to be unreal when it genuinely appears to be something on evidence ordinarily reliable, but is cancelled on better evidence. Unreality only appertains to an object of actual experience, and not to something that never assumes even the semblance of reality for us. Further, it will be seen that according to our definition of unreality, many things may pass for real which may truly be unreal. Among these again, there will be those which can be detected to be unreal by the ordinary means of knowledge, as when a rope is mistaken for a snake. But there might certainly be things which cannot be so detected; and the question arises, what is absolute reality?

This question, in our opinion, depends for its solution upon a consideration of the different forms of evidence by which we apprehend reality and the assent which they compel out of us. The most important form by which we apprehend reality is sense-evidence. Here error is often committed and also corrected. One sense corrects the error of another sense, and the same sense corrects its own errors under better conditions of perception. But when all is said and done, the assent which this form of evidence compels out of us is neither whole-hearted nor unconditional. We always doubt, and cannot help doing so, the reality of things which we perceive through the senses This sort of evidence is unreliable by

its very nature. We know for certain that we never can get at the thing as it is in this way. But while the defects of this form of evidence are quite evident, it is also evident that there is no other form of evidence which can correct its errors absolutely. For there is here an unbridgeable gulf between the thing and the evidence of the thing. The thing is not its own evidence. The evidence is provided by intelligent nature, while the thing itself is unintelligent. Merely to raise the question therefore, what the thing is in itself?, is to raise a foolish question. For what does not evidence itself can only be *as it is evidenced*; and what is only as it is evidenced, cannot be *in itself*.

That which is proved real by sense-evidence or other evidence dependent

thereon may genuinely appear to be something. So far indeed it may be posited to be something. But it is something that is always capable of being cancelled by better evidence of a similar kind. And in the end, the gulf between the thing and the evidence of the thing can never be bridged, and the thing remains an appearance dependent for its form and so its being upon that which evidences it. The world of sense-objects is then, according to our signification of the term, "unreal." For it is, by its very nature, liable to being cancelled.

The reality can only belong to that which is its own evidence, and which can therefore never be falsified or cancelled by any other evidence. The

self is the only thing which evidences itself, and can never therefore be proved to be otherwise than as it is. It is the only thing that we *take to be real*, and *is real* always and under all circumstances.

The unreal is that which is different from what it appears. The real is that which is what it appears. But what appears can only be something to the person to whom it appears and in accordance with his forms of apprehension. It is determined to be something not by any evidence inherent in it, but by the evidence native to the percipient to whom it appears. Such an appearance can be nothing *in itself*; it is a mere appearance. The real must be self-evident; it must not appear. The

self is the only reality that does not appear. Its being and the intuition of its being are not distinct. It employs the senses and the understanding to know other things; it does not know itself through them. It is truly self--known, and therefore real absolutely.

## CHAPTER. III

### REALITY AND EXPERIENCE.

We have so far tried to characterise reality by distinguishing it from unreality. We shall now proceed to consider some of its more positive characteristics. It is common to speak of the real as being something in itself. Now it appears to us that part at least of what is often meant to be conveyed by this assertion is that the real is independent of anyone's experience. But what is independent of anyone's experience must be independent of all experience; for there is no experience which is not the experience of some one individual. We shall therefore consider the question whether reality can

be truly said to be independent of all experience.

It is at the very outset obvious that the relation between reality and knowledge is very intimate for us. That which is real can affect *us* as real only when it is known; and what is never known is what lacks being. Further, reality may be anything; but it is real to *us* only to the extent and the manner in which it affects us or is known by us. What is beyond such affection is nothing to us; and if we still postulate it, the postulate can only be regarded as unwarranted and illogical. It is clear then that the unity of reality with knowledge is fully realised so far as *we* have a right to speak of reality.

But is there any impersonal stand-point from which the problem could be treated? Evidently there is none. What will therefore be contended is not that reality has no relation to knowledge, or that it is not known. What will be contended is that although it may be known, it may, firstly, quite as well remain unknown; and secondly, even when it is known, it may not be known as it is. The latter point is not relevant to our present purpose. We need only point out in this connection that if reality is not known as it is, it is not known at all. We must take it for granted therefore that at least some knowledge which we have is appropriate to reality as it is. If all our knowledge is inappropriate to

reality, and we have no proper subjective indication of the latter, we have no problem on hand; for we cannot talk significantly of reality or of its relation to knowledge.

We take it for granted then that reality may somehow be known as it is. The question to be considered is whether it would continue to be the reality it is if it were not known. Evidently there is no means of knowing whether something can continue to be that something *when it is not known,* except by a certain interpretation of our actual knowledge of it. This knowledge then must be taken to be fully comprehensive of any independence which reality might have in respect of it.

There is no doubt now that our ordinary experience does appear to indicate something that is independent of it. We know what we call physical objects; and both the form of their existence and the way we apprehend them seem to suggest that they existed before we knew them. We know them to be just there, outside us,--and not as something initiated into being by any process of our thought. But this is all that could be said in justification of the above position, namely that things exist before they are known. There is still the question to be answered, how do they exist when they are not known? If the manner of that existence has nothing to differentiate it from its present existence, the

forms of experience in which this existence is analysable cannot be supposed to be really excluded from its past and supposedly independent being. *Mere temporal position* can make no difference to the essential nature of things. There is indeed a sense in which time may be said to be the stuff of reality; but that is a sense in which the whole content of being must be taken to be different in different moments of time, and it would not be true to say that the thing as now apprehended existed before it was apprehended.

This is not all. Experience is implicated in everything that the thing can be made to signify. We say the thing existed *before* it was known. But this past existence of the

thing is itself significant only *within* the unity of experience. What is really past in respect of experience can never be *known as past.* It is the self--identity of experience through change that makes possible the know-ledge of temporal movement and of different phases in that movement. Something that does not fall within experience can never therefore be assigned any place in the temporal series; it cannot be said to have exist-ed in the past. The unity of experi-ence is accordingly comprehensive of all being, past, present and future; there can be nothing more compre-hensive than it.

We shall do well here to analyse a little our knowledge of temporal divisions. A thing, it is evident, can-

not be said to be in the present because of a peculiar quality in the thing itself. It can only be said to be in the present because it is experienced in a peculiar way. This experience can best be described as the present experience of the thing. The thing by itself is neither in the present nor in the past nor anywhere. Again, a thing can only be said to have existed in the past, when it is related to experience in a way that is distinguishable from the present experience of a thing, and yet involves it. Unless something is presently experienced, we can have no idea of the past or of something that preceded the present; and in having this idea, our experience reaches out to the thing which it places in the past. Objects of experi-

ence then which appear to have existed before experience really imply this experience, and the appearance is no proof that the objects really so existed.

It might now be argued that we need not go to our apprehension of the fact that the thing existed in the past and before it was experienced in order to prove its independence. This independence is proved from our present apprehension of it. The thing is apprehended to be outside the apprehending mind and independent of the apprehension. There is no doubt now that we distinguish the manner of existence of a physical object from that of an idea. The latter we say is in the mind, and the former outside the mind. But do we

really apprehend anything to be outside the mind? Is not the phrase "outside the mind" a phrase without meaning? The object apprehended cannot be outside the apprehension. If it were, it would never be apprehended. And apprehension is not non-mental. In what sense then can we say that the thing is outside the mind? It appears to us to be a self-contradiction to affirm that a thing is apprehended to be outside the mind.

An object, it is true, appears to be just *there*, outside, in physical space. But this does not mean that it is outside the mind. It merely indicates the form of its existence, a form significant only to an apprehending mind. A thing is not an object to

itself. Nor is one thing an object to another thing. Objective existence cannot be self-dependent existence. It is existence only to and for a subject. How can we prove it to be independent of the latter?

Coming closer to the problem we find that the forms which the things assume cannot be intelligible apart from the way in which they are experienced. A sound for example that is not heard as sound can be sound in no sense; a colour that is not seen colour is not colour, etc. In fact there is no form which an object can assume which is intelligible by itself and in itself, and apart from its relation to sensuous experience. This experience is therefore the ground of the reality of the physical

universe, and nothing can be real in the latter which does not implicate it.

We are accustomed to think of experience as limited by reality, and of reality as that which limits experience. But if experience were limited, would that which limits it be ever known? Reality is known. How can it be said to limit experience? Besides, we transcend the limitation in the very act of postulating it. For, if experience were really limited, there would be no awareness of the limitation; and where there is no awareness, the existence of the limitation cannot be proved.

Experience is not a mere part of a greater whole which is reality; it

occupies in respect of reality a position in which the whole itself is comprehended, and is real only as thus comprehended. That which is a mere part cannot know the other part of the same whole. Experience is the very knowledge of reality. It cannot be a part of reality, or even of some other whole which includes both. There can be no whole wider than the whole of experience.

The fundamental error of the view according to which reality is said to be independent of experience consists in the failure to appreciate the relation of what is called the self to reality. I, the self, am not merely one of the real things; nor is the action of these things upon myself one of the many actions which they

interchange among themselves. All actions are significant in me; and there is nothing outside me which can act upon me. Nothing can exclude me, nothing can be outside me; for nothing can think away that respect for me in virtue of which alone it is what it is. *I am the real whole; for everything is real only in my experience of it.*

## CHAPTER IV.

### BEING-IN-ITSELF.

The real cannot be independent of all experience. But there is a sense in which it must nevertheless be something in-itself. It must not depend for its existence upon anything outside it. The question that we should now consider is, what things may be said to have this reality?

There are firstly objects of sense-perception. But they are determined to be those objects only in actual perception. Their ground does not lie in them. Thus visual objects have their ground in vision which is a function of individual percipients. Sounds have their ground in the

auditory sense which is another such function, and so on. These objects of perception are therefore not real *in themselves*. The ground of their reality lies wholly in that which perceives them, namely the subject.

The real must not be an object of sense-apprehension. But it is futile to escape the admission of its dependence upon such apprehension, so long as we keep it in outside space endowed with all the sensible qualities which make up our universe of sensible appearance. The only way this admission can be avoided is to conceive it so, that the knowledge of it does not involve the intermediation of the senses or instruments of knowledge analogous to the senses. It is then alone that the real can be

proved to have the ground of its being *in itself*.

The only thing that can never be sensuously apprehended, and yet is known as it is, is the self. We no doubt, in common parlance, speak of our awareness *of* the self, as though the self were one thing and its awareness another. Indeed if the two were distinct in any way, it would no longer be true to say that self-knowledge is not on the analogy of sense-knowledge. It is evident however that if the self were distinct from the awareness of it, it should at least be presentable in thought. But what is so presentable is not what we, even in mistake, can call our self. True self-awareness does not relate to any entity outside

awareness. The more we tried to go out, the less should we come by the self. Awareness itself is the self. No doubt in speaking of the awareness of objects, we distinguish this awareness from 'that which is aware.' But even then what intuitive ground have we for believing in the entity which we call "that which is aware"? Evidently, it is the very same awareness by which we are aware of objects that constitutes the inmost intuition of our own being. There is no distinct and separate intuition of this being. Any such intuition would only be the intuition of something objective; and we unconsciously, and almost automatically, distinguish our self from what is objective. Our self alone realises the true ideal of being, which is the identity of being

with the knowledge of being. It is the only thing-in-itself.

We have so far taken it for granted that an object of perception is not independent of perception. But it might be maintained that these objects have an aspect of being in which their content is not so dependent. We shall therefore proceed to consider the nature of this content. We must suppose that part at least of this content must consist of certain spatial qualities. The object must have some dimension and a form. Further, it is difficult to imagine that what occupies space is entirely devoid of those other qualities which are apprehended through our various senses,–that it is without colour, without taste, etc.

The question now is, can we suppose that any of these qualities, apart from their being sensible, are such that they can be said to be determined wholly *in themselves*?

We are accustomed to think that an object is first perceived and then compared to other objects, that it does not by its nature involve any necessary relation. We seem to perceive the white of a piece of paper immediately, and then proceed to determine, by comparisons, the degree of its whiteness. This however is far from being true. We very often think quickly, and we interpret the difficulty of analysing the processes of such quick thinking as the absence of thought altogether. We never perceive anything immediately

as it is called. To perceive is to isolate and to relate. There is no stage in this perception where we may be said to begin point-blank, and not to mediate our perception with the relating activity of thought. To speak of a "first and original" perception is to use a figure, not to state a fact. We can never carry our analysis of perception to a point where we can even approximately describe what we perceive as an "undiscriminated and unrelated content."

A physical object can only have the sort of content which we have already indicated, and which is capable of being perceived. This content is by its very nature *related.* It cannot be said to be determined that content *in itself.* In itself, it

can have no form. Related-ness is of the very essence of it. Whatever content then we may credit a physical object with, it can only be determined to be that content in relation to what is different from it and beyond it. It cannot be self-grounded, and cannot therefore have any being *in itself*.

That which is related has in a sense the ground of its being in that to which it is related. But if the process has simply to be carried back, we do not get the ground of reality anywhere. If *a*, for example, is dependent for its being on *b*, and *b* in its turn on *a*, and neither of them is self-grounded, the very relation by which *a* and *b* are mutually determined to be those objects becomes

impossible of realisation, and the respective contents can never be obtained. The possibility of obtaining them lies in the fact that *a* is not the ground of *b*, nor *b* the ground of *a*; for neither of them is self-grounded. The ground of both lies in that which supports the relation, and is therefore not itself related. This unrelated ground cannot be a part of the physical world; for we have seen that no part of that world can be truly unrelated. It cannot be unintelligent; for there can be no real relation, without the consciousness of togetherness. The only reality that satisfies these conditions is the self. It is involved in every true relation, and yet is not itself related. It is were related, who could possibly

be aware of the relation? The self alone is aware of all relations. It is therefore beyond them. It is the only reality that is self-grounded, and therefore has true being.

## CHAPTER V.

### PERMANENCE.

We have seen in the previous chapter that reality must be something in itself. An idea allied to this is that of permanence. What is impermanent necessarily drives us to seek its cause. We are satisfied that it does not contain the ground of its being in itself. We are impelled to seek the cause of the world for the same reason. And when we trace this cause to God, it is because God alone satisfies the condition of permanence. The permanent alone is regarded by us as truly real. The difficulty of conceiving that something happens without a cause is no other than the difficulty implied in the conception

that what is impermanent may have the ground of its being in itself.

There are now two different ways in which causes might be studied. There is the attitude of mind which seeks to understand one thing by many things. It expands one fact into many facts so to say. This is the study of gross or material causes. It is helpful not in understanding a thing so much as in producing it. There is the attitude on the other hand which seeks to grasp many things by one thing, their essential nature. It seizes upon the very stuff of reality, and gives a unifying and therefore a more intelligible view of things. These causes alone are the proper subject-matter of philosophy, and it is in them that we can get a

permanent and abiding ground of things.

The real may be permanent. But it might now be argued that what has temporal existence only, is also real in its own way. Something cannot be less real because it is not real all the time. It is enough for its reality that it is something, and has being however short in duration. The permanent may have so much longer run of being, but it cannot take away from the reality of that which does not last as long.

The temporal may also be real. But nobody would argue that it is real because of its temporality. It is real because it appears to be something. It is an important question

in this connection whether that which appears to be something should on that account be regarded as real. Some philosophers no doubt deduce the reality of an object from the mere fact of its being apprehended as that object. But it appears to us that there is no logical connection between the fact that "something is apprehended to be something" and the fact that "something *is* that something." However we do not want to enter into a discussion of the subject in this place, or to say what exactly is the nature of our intuition of the real. Whatever that intuition may be, whether it is the intuition of something that is apprehended to be something or of something that can never be

so apprehended, we maintain that the duration of the real is not irrelevant to our intuition of the real. We do not determine something to be real first, and then leave it as a matter of no account whether that something changes or does not change. The idea of durability cannot be separated from the *nature* of a thing or what the thing is, and in determining a thing to be real we cannot but determine at the same time the status of the thing in terms of temporal or non-temporal existence.

There is one well-known couple in Hindoo literature which sets forth the relation of being and the duration of being in words that cannot but appeal. We are told in the

Bhagvat Gita,–"The unreal can never be; the real never ceases to be." At first sight the statement appears to be contradicted by facts. For it is evident that something which happens or comes into being at a particular time, did not exist before that time. Its coming into being is therefore a case of something that was unreal becoming real. Again, the something ceases to exist, which contradicts the second part of the statement. This is however only a superficial view of the matter.

That which comes into being at a particular moment of time may be regarded as real. But in that sense we also regard the situation that preceded it as equally real. We go even farther. We consider that there

is a continuity between this situation and the actual happening, and would never admit that the something was initiated into being without any situation that might be said to lead up to it. A first inception into being, or an event that has no cause, are alike unintelligible to us. Nothing in fact is real to us which is not real somehow from the beginning,—real before it assumes the form which we happen to be regarding. The objections to a theory of creation out of pure nothing are based on the same conviction. Either then we must admit the possibility of uncaused events, and regard "everything which happens" as real only in the instant in which it happens and as having no ground whatsoever in anything

that precedes it, or we must regard the real as *already* real and therefore undergoing no change so far as its reality is concerned. We think the issue thus stated leaves no room for doubt. Reason can only go from the real to the real, from the event to its cause. Nay, farther. It does not do merely to give B as the cause of A. One thing cannot explain another. And if we must speak in terms of causes and effects, reason we might say is only satisfied in the notion of the identity of cause and effect. For the effect, so far as it is distinct from the cause, is unreal in the cause; and the unreal cannot account for the real. Our reason therefore demands that the real must be real always, and for the same reason it must have a

form of existence that is not liable to change.

That which is real must be real always. For there can be no continuity between being and not-being, and what we have once posited as real we cannot help continuing to posit as real. Let us however suppose that something which is, ceases to exist. Evidently, it can do so either abruptly or only gradually. If it ceases to exist abruptly, there will be no continuity between "what was" and "what is;" and even the statement that what was has ceased to be, would be out of place. There is simply no connecting link between the past existence and the present non-existence of the thing in question. We must therefore suppose that the

something ceases to exist gradually. But however gradual the change, there can be no gradations between the being of something and its non-being; and whenever and wherever this transition takes place, we have absolute discontinuity, and once again there is no warrant for the statement that the thing that was, has ceased to be. There is warrant for the statement only when it can be shown that the thing which ceases to exist is evidenced even in the supposed end of it. But then it can never cease to exist.

That which comes to an end, can only do so by a certain process. This process evidently must start from the thing itself. But where the process starts, we have a new beginning

already, and not the end of anything. What sense then is there in saying that the process starts *from* the thing, or that it denotes the end *of* the thing? It does not touch the thing anywhere; and it is almost as true to say that the thing has ended as that nothing has ended. Further, the beginning of a process " which is the end of a thing" cannot be separated from this end by any interval of actual being. What then is nothing when it has ended, was also nothing when the end so to say overtook it. To argue that it was something *before* the end overtook it, is quite irrelevant. For that something can never be shown to be the thing that has ended. No doubt the static imagery of our thought obliges us to conceive

the being of a thing first, and then to conceive the end as something supervening upon this being. But the end is never really supervened. We have the being of the thing on the one hand, and something that is different from the thing on the other; and the two are never connected in any intelligible way.

We conclude that what does not exist in the beginning, and does not exist in the end, and only appears to exist in the middle, does not really exist. It contradicts our deepest intuition of being, which, as we have seen, can neither come into being, nor having been, go out of it.

It is not to be understood that we want to impose upon the real the

rule that it should be endless so far as the passage of time is concerned. Such endlessness would indeed be a mechanical thing and would shed no glory upon the real. But the real, whatever else it may be, must have a character that is unaffected by temporal change. That is just wherein true eternity consists; and it is only a crude image of this which we find in the notion of permanence in time.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE IMAGE OF ETERNITY.

The real we have seen must be out of time. But what sort of thing can truly be said to have this character? There are firstly objects of nature. These change. Still it is quite possible that there might be no inner incompatibility between the essence of a natural object and the notion of "being out of time." What however can this essence possibly be? It is evident that however the essence is conceived, it must be sensible; and further that the relation which this implies can never be enduring in time. Apart from the inconstancy of the relation between the object sensed and the physical organism

of the percipient, the object, in order to be sensed, has to be attended to; and attention involves a continuous shifting of the locus of the object. The ordinary view is that in attending to an object we keep the object fixed. But if that were so, there would be no room for attention. It is of the very essence of it to keep the aspect as well as the meaning of the object changing; it expands and restricts it in turn. Attention is not merely the fixing of an attitude; it is an intelligent *activity*; and when this activity is implied in our knowledge of a thing, we can never be supposed to get a static view of the latter. Things appear unchanging, because they are viewed in the specious present; and the specious present

is the result of a more or less diffused attention.

There of lastly the consideration that a thing is not merely sensed. In being sensed, it is also related. What the thing will therefore appear also depends upon the sort of relations which thought establishes between it and other things. It is a well-known thought that the same object can appear to the ordinary uninformed man in one light, and to the man of science in quite a different light. We say the latter sees more in it. And yet he sees more because he knows more; and knowledge is of the relations. An object then is what it is according to the relations which each man, guided by his own interest and intelligence, establishes between

it and other *objects.* There is no sense therefore in speaking of what is sensible as being permanent. What is sensible is just as it is viewed. And what is just as it is viewed can have none of that independence which is necessary to the realisation of the notion of permanence.

We have so far considered natural objects as synonymous with sensible objects. But it is possible to think that they are more than that. They are material, and do not in themselves imply any relation to a sensible being. What now should we suppose the nature of matter to consist in, taking matter in a purely objective way?

It is evident that however we may think of matter, we cannot but think

of it except as extended. Such indeed is the relation between our idea of matter and that of extension, that we interchange the terms. Matter is that which has parts. And the only quality which appears to constitute them matter is the quality of mutual exclusion. It is however not difficult to see that mutual exclusion carried to a limit will not yield any unit of being, or what may be called a substance. It can only yield the unextended points of pure geometry, and these are not material in the usual sense of that term. Also the material continuum thus conceived will in no wise be different from the continuum of pure space. Matter however is not space. And the one thing that distinguishes matter from

space is that while the parts of the latter may be supposed to lie side by side as in a picture, the parts of matter are active; they are more properly points of force than points merely in space. Matter then has parts; and these parts are material, only so far as they exert mutual influence and in general effect something.

We have however not yet got down to the very essence of matter. Matter has parts which are in space. These parts we have supposed to be something like "points of force." But we have no idea of a "point of force." We evidently mean something substantial by it. But a substance, in any conception that we can make of it, is something that merely

*is*, and not "something-in-the-doing." A "point of force" on the other hand, cannot be merely something that *is*, although when we do think of it, we cannot help thinking of it as something static, or material in the most undynamical sense of that term. We have simply no image or even idea of a point of force.

There is no need however to postulate any such entities. They do not explain the general effectiveness of matter. Rather the concept is itself unintelligible. The general effectiveness of matter is better explained by supposing that it consisted in a certain complication of spatial and temporal elements only. If what we call parts of matter lay simply in infinite space, they would lie in it

side by side without effecting anything. If they lay simply in infinite time, they would succeed each other much in the same way as the pictures of a serial succeed each other on the screen. The pictures don't determine each other, exert any influence upon each other, or in general effect anything. This effectiveness is only rendered possible by that mutual implication of time and space by which it becomes impossible for two elements *a* and *b* to occupy the same space *c* at one and the same moment of time *d*. We may conceive substance of some sort. But it will not explain the effectiveness which we attribute to parts of matter. Even the idea of force is too vague; and when we conceive a force in opera-

tion, the only image we can draw upon is the one we have indicated, namely the sort of complication of spatial and temporal elements by which it becomes impossible for two distinct units of being to occupy the same space at the same time.

We have, in our attempt to understand the character of that effectiveness which we attribute to matter, postulated certain *units of being*. The question will naturally arise, what are these *units* if they are not already matter? We admit that there is no going out of the circle. All we can say is that the units taken by themselves do not explain the nature of matter. The only non-sensuous and scientific basis of materiality may be said to consist in the production of

effects ; and this can only be understood when matter is taken to be a certain spatio-temporal modification. But we do not presume that this concept itself is quite intelligible.

There is a certain poetic conception of matter current in the present-day scientific literature. Matter is supposed to be constituted of electrons or points of electric energy. These electrons are supposed not to undergo any change themselves. They are literally the ultimate constituents of matter. Now I do not know what the inner constitution of an electron is. Perhaps nobody has gone beyond merely postulating it. And in the very nature of the case there will somewhere be an end to this sort of investigation. We shall have to declare that all we

know are certain phenomena, and that the ultimate constituents of matter, if there be any, are to us a mystery. Still we may infer our own conclusions from what we are told about the electron. The electron is said to be the indestructible and permanent entity of nature. At the same time, it has motion in space, and can be deflected from its path. Now can we conceive something to be really unchanging which can be impelled from outside? I think, we cannot. The impulsion must be received in an inner change of state, and then alone can the body be supposed to make the necessary adjustment. Indeed with regard to a self-conscious being, we can make a real distinction between inner and outer being, and we can also assert

that its inner unity is quite compatible with its outer change and movement. But there can be no such contrast between inner and outer being in what lacks the consciousness of its own unity; and any movement of the outer being of such a thing is at the same time the movement of its inner being. There is no inner being distinct and apart which is uninvolved in the outer movement.

However we may try to conceive of matter, it can never provide us with a true image of permanence. All we can get at are certain processes or phenomena; we can never get at *the thing*, much less at a self-conscious thing. And it is only the latter that can provide us with the image we want.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE IMAGE OF ETERNITY (*Continued*)

Everything that is presentable to the senses has a spatio-temporal existence; and the only permanence that we can attribute to it is the permanence that answers a rough description based on crude sense-testimony. We might go further here and say that anything that is not self-certified and self-ascertainable cannot have true unity of being; it will be simply just as it is viewed; and what is simply just as it is viewed cannot have eternal existence.

The only thing real that is not presentable and is self-evidenced is the self in the individual. Everyone

knows that he himself is, and also that he can never have any image of himself. He never doubts his own reality. And if he inquired into the evidence by which he knew himself, he would not be able to point to any. All he could say is, "I feel intuitively certain that I am, and this intuition is at the back of all my certainty about other things." This intuitive certainty of my self is not a vague feeling. It is the conscious ness of being. Only this consciousness is not analysable into a subject-object relation.

Further, the consciousness I have of my self is the consciousness of something that never can be otherwise than what it is intuited to be at any one time. The self can undergo

no change in the form of its being. What is an object to me may be one thing at one time and quite another thing at another time, although I may fail to see any difference in its appearance to me. It is something that I never can intuit from within; and the way I am aware of it necessarilly imposes upon my knowledge the character of uncertainty. My self is not objective to me. It cannot be known otherwise than what it is in its inmost being. Again, something can become different of which there can be varieties. But what is at the back of varieties and makes their knowledge possible cannot be supposed itself to vary. When we think of varieties we naturally think of objective being; for that can be differ-

entiated. Every object has a certain character, and a character that can become a different character. But what has no character cannot be supposed to change its character. What then is the self to change into? How different is it to become from itself? The only character we can give it is the character of existence; and existence cannot be supposed to change into anything else; it is what simply is, and will always be.

It might now be argued that this is all right so long as we are conscious and awake. But what evidence have we that we shall never cease to be, or change into something non-intelligent? Rather any evidence that we have, points in the opposite direction. In sleep we are not aware

of anything. And in death, consciousness never comes back. If now our only ground for belief in an intelligent self is our consciousness of the self, how can it be proved that the self continues to exist when the consciousness in question is absent? If the self is intelligent and remains unchanging, the consciousness which we now have of it must always become possible.

It is not difficult to see here that the consciousness which we now have of the self is interpreted in a very narrow sense. We think of this consciousness as we think of the consciousness of any object *a*, *b* or *c*. And as we may be supposed to lose the consciousness of these objects, we are also supposed to lose the cons-

ciousness of the self. If we did not interpret the self on the analogy of an object, and the consciousness of the self on the analogy of the consciousness of an object, there would be no sense whatsoever in speaking of the loss of self-consciousness. However far we may stretch our imagination, this loss can only be understood as the absence of consciousness of some more or less definite object. We cannot even conceive the loss of consciousness appropriate to the self as such. For the self and its consciousness are not two distinct things. All loss of consciousness is relative to objects only, and not to that which alone knows such loss. In

short, there is not, and there never can be in the very nature of the case, any positive information about the self otherwise than as self-aware and intelligent. And when we speak of the self as ceasing to exist or changing into something non-intelligent, we are either speaking of something that is already not the self, or we are speaking words without meaning. The only possible sense we can attach to the loss of consciousness of the self is the loss of consciousness of *all* objects as in sleep, etc.

We have at least so far appeared to admit that we may lose consciousness of all objects. But is this strictly true? It is interesting to inquire. To outward appearances it does appear to be true that we lose consci-

ousness of all objects at times. But are we not confronted, when we have apparently driven out all objects from consciousness, with an image of darkness or of "the absence of objects?" And are we sure that this image is not itself an object, and does not imply all those objects which it appears to negative? The question does not admit of any uncertainty. When we have driven out all objects from sleep, we have sleep itself to think of. That is not nothing. It is a very definite image,–an image that implies all the images of waking life. Sleep would not be sleep if we did not render it into an object. The so-called actual sleep, in which we are supposed not to know anything, has no image appropriate to it; it is

not sleep in any sense of the term that we can significantly speak of. The only condition that we can significantly speak of as sleep is the condition that presents to us an image of darkness, and is therefore our object. We really have no experience of a state of our being in which no object whatsoever is presented to us. We commit a fallacy therefore when we suppose that sleep is such a state, and that we are aware of it as that state. We commit a still greater fallacy when we suppose that when no object is presented, the self itself is in darkness or has even ceased to exist as intelligent. Darkness is the *object* of the self. What idea have we of darkness in the self? Non-existence can only be understood as a concept relative

to what first is there, namely the object; and it implies this object. How can we conceive of the non-existence of that which is never an object, and the non-existence of which, if real, *could never be known to anyone.*

We have said that we can form no idea of a state of our being in which no object is presented. But does this mean that we never really go to sleep, and that sleep is only an *idea* of our waking life? I think it is as great a mistake to suppose that sleep is only an idea of our waking life, as that what we call sleep is a condition of our self and not something objective to it. Sleep is not an idea of our waking life. In respect of this life, it is quite as real. We shall go

further. What we know as waking life is *relative* to sleep. It is the condition that *succeeds* sleep. And if we dropped the reference to sleep, we should never be aware that we are awake. In fact, *to be awake is to have got up from sleep.* Wakefulness is not a codition of our self *sui-generis.* If it were such, we should never be aware of it as an object, or as something intimately connected in its form with another object. As it is, it is only in getting up from sleep that we know ourselves as being awake. There is no consciousness of wakefulness apart from this relation,—which would not be the case if it were the condition of the self itself.

Sleep cannot be said to supervene upon the intelligent self. For it is

an object to it. Nor can wakefulness be said to be its proper nature. For that too is objective to it. The true nature of the self is that intuitiveness alone in which both sleep and wakefulness are intuited as objects, and which therefore can never be supposed itself to sleep or to wake up. This is the only way in which the true being of the self could be understood. The self is that which does not sleep, and does not wake. It is that other wakefulness, in which these changing states are themselves intuited, and which can therefore never itself pass away

We have built up our argument by a consideration of the condition we call sleep. It may however be said that there is no sleep as a state of

complete unconsciousness, and that what we call sleep is only consciousness below a certain level. Now indeed if this is true, we should somehow and somewhere be aware of the fact. We are not aware of it in sleep. And when we wake up, we find a *complete gap* in our conscious life during what we know as our sleep. And this is the only significant fact of experience which we can refer to in trying to understand what sleep is. However if we do not believe in the cessation of consciouness anywhere, there should be no problem of unconsciousness, and we should remain content with the assertion that self-consciousness remains always in tact, and that the self can never be otherwise than what it is

intuited to be. The fact of this problem shows that sleep cannot be explained away in terms of mere conscious and waking life.

It might here be thought that the problem of unconsciousness can yet be based upon the fact of death. But the only subjective indication we can ever have of death is our actual experience of sleep. It is this image which we fear in fearing death. There can be no greater annihilation or deeper unconsciousness in death than what we may be said to experience actually in sleep. The only difference appears to be that in the one case consciousness returns, and in the other its return is only problematic. But if the image is exactly the same, the objectivity of that

image can never be disputed; and every argument that is applicable to sleep will also be applicable to that longer sleep which we call death. There is only *one type* of unconsciousness; and that is what constitutes an *object* to the self. It can never be the condition of the self itself; for the self can never be an object to itself.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE IMAGE OF ETERNITY (*continued*).

We have so far tried to show that there is no experience which indicates that the self ceases to exist at any time. It might however be argued that the concept of the self which we have been considering is not adequate. The self is not a mere abstract and empty ego-sense, or the sense of "I". It is a concrete reality that participates in our whole mental life. It is what knows, feels and acts. And what discharges these functions cannot be supposed to remain unchanged and self-identical. Also the self has a life of its own. And life means change and growth. How can we suppose the self to be out of time and an image of eternity?

The self is said to know. And it is argued that it could not know if it were not itself active, and if it were not impelled from outside to know. Now we quite admit that a certain impulsion may be received from outside. But it can affect only that which has contact with matter, and is therefore itself material. Our consciousness of the self is not the consciousness of something that can even remotely be called material. Further, if the self could be affected in any way from outside, it would be drawn into the process which constitutes the affection. Nothing would then be left over that can cognise, or recognise the affection. No doubt, we postulate a certain process as preceding actual knowledge. But this

process is not itself knowledge. And when knowledge does take place, there is no process. There is the simple awareness of a certain fact. This awareness is rendered possible, because that which is aware, namely the self, remains unchanged and merely itself. We speak of the self as being active in knowledge. But this is figurative only. If the self itself changed in being active, it would be only by a misinterpretation of the situation that we could call the activity as the activity *of* the self. The real origin of the impulse would be quite impersonal. But at the same time what are we to make of an activity of the self in which the self remains unchanged and simply itself? How are we to connect the activity with it?

The self is said to be pleased and displeased and to pass through various states. But nobody can argue that in being pleased, the self itself becomes pleasure. How then is the self itself to be affected? Does not all enjoyment and suffering consist in an awareness, which is really detached, of certain mental conditions? If the self itself changed in any way, we should be reduced to the absurd position that the self may be pleased without ever knowing that it is pleased, and it may be displeased without ever knowing that it is displeased. But without the knowledge, how can it be said to be really pleased or pained? The fact is that it is in this knowledge, or awareness of pleasure and pain, that all the pain and plea-

sure of the self consists. Paradoxical therefore though it may seem, the self does not enjoy although enjoying; it does not suffer although suffering. It remains really unaffected in all conditions of so-called pleasure and pain.

The self is said to will certain things and do them. And it is argued that this is not possible without an inner determination which is tantamount to a changed condition of being. Once again however we are presented with only a superficial view of the matter. If it is true that the self is internally determined in all volitional acts, it will not be the same thing after it has willed those acts that it was before them. But if it is not the same thing, how can it

be aware of those acts as willed by it? The person that is yet undetermined internally has not willed; he cannot be supposed to be aware of any such acts on his part. The person who is determined, and who for that reason is no longer the same person, may find himself as he is determined; but he cannot be aware of having originated anything or willed anything. The truth is that the person who is supposed to have willed, must remain himself absolutely unchanged through the process, if he is to know himself as the one that has issued the fiat. Besides, if the self were internally determined in willing anything,.its acts would not be free acts. Self-determination is a big word in philosophy. It is supposed to signify

much. But either it is a contradiction in terms, or it implies that the self is only a play-thing of its own ideas, however noble these may be supposed to be.

The various arguments that we have advanced to prove the self to be unchangeable seem however to err in one important respect. The self it may be argued is a concrete person, and not an empty "I''. It has a character, and this character grows with experience and education. It is however not difficult to see that unless the self is self-identical through change, neither experience nor education will so much as become possible. We say it is the same person who has grown in wisdom or changed his habits. We may even go so far as to

say that he has become an entirely different person. And yet it is the person whom we knew, that has become different. What is this sameness of the person? It cannot be any peculiarity of the mental life. In fact, there is nothing in mental life which does not change with the so-called experience and education. The only thing we can get at as *the* person is the being which we know in simple self-consciousness, the consciousness of "I". This does not change. It is the only sameness in the different periods of the life of what is called the same individual. Experience and education themselves become possible because of the self-identity of the being thus signified; they can never affect that being.

It might here be asked: But has not the self a certain uniqueness and individuality about it? And if it has, must not the self be taken together with its character? There is no doubt now that in distinguishing one individual from another, character is all-important. But after all character is a changeable thing, a mere accident. The true individual is not to be found in it. The true individual has no character. How can we then individualise it, or fix those limitations in it whereby one individual may be distinguished from another?

We are apt to think that there is some specific quality not acquired which distinguishes one individual from another, and in virtue of which A is a different person from B. But

what is this quality ? The self has no structure that we can think of, either mental or spiritual. The ego-sense is as far as we can go ; it is the bed-rock of true individuality. And there is no quality that we can think of, which distinguishes one ego-sense from another. Individuality is only constituted by the true individual *assuming* the qualities that make up his changing character. There is no other mark in him which may be said to distinguish him from the so-called other individuals.

We do not indeed find any content worth thinking of in the empty consciousness of " I ". But this is because of a wrong tendency to measure reality by its objectivity. We seem not to be impressed unless we make



ourselves little, and magnify the world. We have yet to learn that however we may magnify the reality outside us, the self is greater than it; for it is what gives it magnitude and so reality. In terms of objective content, the self is indeed empty. But it is the only reality that may be said to have a sting in it, and to provide sting to everything that appears real to us.



## CHAPTER IX.

### THE REAL AS A PRINCIPLE OF COMPLETION.

We have tried to show in the preceding chapters that the real must be unchanging, permanent and eternal. But this is not all. A bit of matter may be supposed, on the ground of its indestructibility, to be really permanent. Is it therefore real? The question evidently depends for its solution upon a consideration of the inner constitution of a thing, and not upon the mere fact of durability.

A bit of matter is something to us; and being something, we cannot suppose it to cease to exist altogether.

But what is the inner constitution of a bit of matter? Evidently, whatever else it may be, it must have parts; and these parts are themselves bits of matter composed of smaller parts. The reality of a piece of matter is thus made up of the reality of its parts; and as these parts have still smaller parts, we are obliged, in order to fix the true constituents of reality, to undertake a process of division that can never come to an end. The reality of a piece of matter is not in itself as that particular whole, but in the parts of which it is constituted; and if we cannot, by the nature of the case, get at ultimate and indivisible parts, we get constituents of reality which have themeselves other constituents.

It is evident that the ultimate constituents of matter can never be obtained in a material way; for what is material is divisible *ad infinitum*; we can never reach a stage in the division where we may be said to have reached the soul of matter.

It might here be contended that we are arguing in a topsy-turvy way. Parts can only be real when the whole is real. We must start with the whole. And it is because the whole is real that we get real parts at all. A bit of matter is real because it is some sort of a whole. It has no doubt parts. But the parts are real because the bit is real, and not *vice versa*.

We no doubt in common experience have to start with some sort of a

whole. But that is because of convenience only. The wholes with which we start are the wholes that are easily experienced. They are not logical wholes. In fact anything would suit us as a whole which we can tackle as an object. When however we raise the metaphysical issue as to a whole that is satisfactory, we have necessarily to consider the inner constitution of such a whole; in other words, we have to answer the question, how is the whole related to its parts? We shall now proceed to consider some of the commonly accepted wholes in order to show how they fail to satisfy the rational concept of a whole.

There is first of all the material or the mechanical whole such as may be

ascribed to a mere group of separate and distinct things. This is clearly a nominal whole. It is more correctly an aggregate; and an aggregate is real not in the sum-total, but in the individual. The individual is what exists; and the whole has no reality whatsoever apart from the individuals. The whole is not an entity. It is at best a group-name.

Organisation of some sort among the individual members will evidently give a new status to this whole. Such a whole is very well exemplified in a living body or in a symphony of notes. Neither of them can merely be reduced to their constituent parts. They are more than the parts. They combine the parts in a unity or a harmony which the parts can never

individually possess. This whole may truly be said to be a new entity, and to be more real that the parts.

Philosophers have suggested this whole as the true type of a whole. But it is not difficult to see that such a whole is not a self-constituted, and therefore a real, whole at all; and it cannot be said to exist as its parts are supposed to exist. We take harmony first. It is easy to see here that harmony consists essentially in a certain *relatedness* of separate notes; it also implies a mind peculiarly trained and constituted. Neither mere separate notes, nor a particular succession of them at a certain rate, can constitute harmony. It is the *effect* which this succession produces in the hearing organ th t makes harmony.

A harmony therefore that is not *heard harmony* cannot exist as harmony. It is not objective, and therefore real in the sense in which the popular mind is content to look upon the separate notes as objective and real.

Is a living organism a better sort of an organised whole? Can we say that it is a self-subsistent unity of parts? It may have this unity. But what is it? A heap of stones has a certain unity; and any change of place among the parts in respect of each other, or removal of a part, will to that extent affect the aspect and the character of the whole. An organism as a physical whole has only a similar unity. There is no birth or death of it different from that which

may be attributed to a heap of stones or to any conglomeration of material parts. Its difference from the latter only comes in, when we consider it in relation to a functioning subject. But then its unity is no longer a mere physical unity. It is the unity of purpose, which is subjective ; it is not the unity of parts in space. It cannot be said to subsist by itself.

We may note here a contradiction in our conception of the whole. The whole we say is necessarily composed of parts. But then it can only be related to the parts in two possible ways, existentially or non-existentially. A herd may be said to be related to the individual members existentially, for the reality of the members is also the reality of the

whole. We do not seek to give to the whole a reality apart from the reality of the members composing it. Here the question, what is ultimately real?–can only be answered by pointing to individuals, or parts that are truly indivisible. But if the whole is not thus related to the parts, it can only be related to them non-existentially. Of this, there are two varieties. We may regard the parts as truly real; and the whole, although it has an existence distinct from that of the parts, is more or less illusory in respect of the latter. Here ultimate reality will reside in the parts, and not in the whole; and we shall be obliged to look for indivisible constituents as the true constituents of reality. It may however be

that the whole is real in a truer sense than the parts, and that the latter are unreal in it. But such a whole will have no parts. It will not be a whole in the ordinary sense. It will be quite indivisible in any dimension that we can think of it. How can we distinguish it from the indivisible constituents of reality which we have called "parts"?

The contention that the part is real because the whole is real does not carry us very far. That is real which is indivisible. And what is indivisible is neither part nor whole in the ordinary sense. In fact, the demand for a whole is not the demand for more constituents. It is a demand for the satisfaction of the principle that the real must be self-

complete. The highest reality has accordingly been spoken of in the Upanishads as "the smallest of the small and the greatest of the great." The truth is that the real which is self-complete has no parts; and what has no parts can be spoken of without self-contradiction as smaller than the smallest part, and greater than the greatest "constituted out of parts." It simply has no size in comparison to things that have size.

What is in time or in space must be distended, and have parts. It cannot realise in itself the principle of completion. But what realises this principle must be out of time and out of space. The physical world is both in time and space. Our mental life is at least in time. A state of the

mind is apprehended as that state because of a gradual and continuous change into another state. We no doubt suppose each state to have a certain duration. But this does not mean that it is really unchanging for the time, or that its duration cannot be split up into smaller durations. The specious present in which we cognise states is only a line of demarcation between the time that has been, and the time that is to be; and it can be drawn ever so thinner. It is not a real interval, an unchanging present pitch-forked between the past and the future. If then our analysis of mental life is correct, there can be nothing in it which can be said truly to realize the principle of completion.

The only thing which can realize this principle is that which is not in space and not in time, - which has no dimension. Our self is the only such thing. It is not spread out in any series. Our intuition of self is the intuition of something so simple that we cannot suppose it to be constituted of parts of any sort. It is the intuition of *one* thing, and an *entire* thing. But this self, although so simple and literally undistended in any dimension, sustains all series, spatial and temporal. It is the principle of synthesis in them. The series, however far carried, can only be finite. The self is the principle of infinity in them. For, the series can be exhausted ; but the principle of synthesis which makes the series possible,

can have no limitation. It is the least, because it is so simple; and yet the greatest, because no series can be greater than what makes the series possible, and is not itself part of any series.

## CHAPTER X.

### PLURALISM AND NON-DUALISM.

Something may be real in the sense which we have tried to elaborate in the preceding chapters. But can there be many entities which are real in that sense? Is there no self-contradiction involved in the idea of there being more than one real being? This is the problem of the one and the many. We shall now proceed to consider it.

Our common experience suggests that there is more than one entity that is real. These entities evidently must either be related among themselves, or they must be supposed to exist in entire independence of each

other. Let us suppose that they are related. But then they cannot constitute a real manifold. For entities that are related imply that which relates them, a unifying principle. This principle is not one of the entities; it is not part of the manifold. It stands outside the manifold, and constitutes the unity of the manifold. The manifold is not real apart from it. It exists in the unity and because of the unity. A manifold to be a *real* manifold must be constituted of entities that are not related, and exist independently of each other.

A manifold of entities that are truly independent of each other is however unthinkable. The many reals that are not related, would not be known as many; and not being

known as many, there is no sense in which they could be conceived to be many. It is because of the unifying principle of knowledge that any manifold is significant to us; and however we may try to eliminate this principle, we still unconsciously make use of it when we retain the manifold. A manifold that is not *conceived* manifold is in no sense a manifold, And yet being conceived, it is no longer a self-subsistent, and therefore a real, manifold. It involves relation, and is real only in the unity, and for it. However then we may try to think of the many, the many necessarily lead us to the one.

We have so far supposed that the principle of unification is super-individual. But it might be argued that

there is one case in which this does not appear to hold good. An individual as an intelligent being is clearly only one among many; and yet he knows other individuals quite as well as he knows himself. A pluralism of such individuals would not contradict itself; for nothing beyond the individuals can be said to unify the individuals or to know them as many.

The knowledge of an individual of his self however is so peculiar that only one thing of the sort can be known by him as real. Other things are known as being outside, and as related. They are *like* certain things and *unlike* others. They are real for us only as they constitute part of a manifold. The self on the other hand is not something outside. It

cannot be conceived to be like or unlike any other self. The knowledge of it is not knowledge by relation. It is at the back of the relating activity of thought itself. To think of the self therefore is necessarily to think of something which can never form part of a manifold, and is one and the only thing of its kind. We can never know any *varieties* of self-hood. How can we say that we know other selfs as we know our own? So far then as the individual may be regarded as the unifying principle, there are no other *individuals* but only *objects*. A pluralism of real individuals is epistemologically unsound. Pluralism is only possible with regard to objects, i. e., with regard to

what constitutes the seen universe of an individual.

It might now be argued that we do not simply know that we are. We also know that we are centres of experience. And experience is only possible, because there is something apart from the individual, that may be known or communicated with. The mere fact of experience therefore proves that the real is not a unity, but some sort of a plurality.

There is no doubt now that the individual experiences. But it is one thing to argue that experience indicates that there must be something real apart from the individual that experiences, and another that there must be at least two different

reals before experience can become possible. The latter position is only an unwarranted extension of the former, and in the very nature of the case can never be proved. We can never conceive a situation that is really prior to experience, and can never show that it contains more than one real. The only proper question therefore to ask is, does experience itself point to the reality of something apart from the individual that experiences?

There is no doubt that it does seem to point to something that is *other* to the individual that experiences. This "other", we have already seen, cannot be an individual but only an object. But because something appears other, or is experienced as

other, can it *be* really other? There is no logical connection between the two propositions, unless we mean by the latter no more than what we do by the former. What is experienced as other can only *be* other as thus experienced. There is no form under which we can conceive it when it is not experienced. We may vaguely talk of it as having some sort of independent being. But unless we render this being into an object, it ceases to signify anything real to us. And once we conceive it as object, the relation of knowledge becomes ultimate for it; and it can never be proved to be real apart from this relation.

It might here be argued that if the relation of knowledge is ultimate for

the object, it is not less so for the individual who experiences. The individual knows himself only in knowing what is different from it. It is only in the consciousness of objects that the individual becomes self-conscious. This view of the matter is quite natural. For we have no awareness of the self as non-experient, and as pure being. And if it can only be known as experient, the relation of knowledge cannot be said to be not-ultimate for it. If then the object necessarily implies the subject, the subject no less implies the object. The experient *is* experient only in relation to what he experiences.

We have said that we know the self only as experient. But what constitutes an experient? It is not

any *form* of being which we can distinguish from pure being. However much we may think of the experient, we can assign it no form. The experient, in the ordinary phrase, is as inscrutable as the self, or as pure being itself. What constitutes him experient is not the assumption of any *form* that we can distinguish from pure being, but only the presence to it in awareness of other objects. If the experient had some sort of a form peculiar to it as experient, we could very well argue that that form would be non-existent when it ceased to be experient. But we cannot point to any which form. No doubt we know it as that who experiences. But of this "that" we have no intuition as "*that.*" It is simply

the intuition of unobjective, and therefore pure, being.

There is a tendency in us to translate all being into objective being. For then we seem to grasp it better. It is not surprising therefore that we appear to know the self better as experient or as subject than as mere self. But is our knowledge of it as experient really more satisfactory or more concrete? We think not. We, on the contrary, externalise the self by relating it to objects. We think of it as the "that," and not as "I." We have some sort of an image for the experient, derived from the knowledge-relation to objects; we have no image, that is even distantly objective, of the "I." The experient becomes itself our

*object* so to say, when we know it as ceasing to be experient in sleep and other similar states. The self as such can never be known to cease to be self; for there is none other than the self that could possibly know the fact. What we know more intimately therefore, and what deserves better the epithet of self, is not the more or less distant experient, but that pure and unrelated being that reveals the experient itself so to say, and can never be known himself to pass away.

The self, although it experiences, does not on that account imply the being of anything different from it; and the argument therefore that the fact of experience proves the truth of some sort of pluralism cannot be justified.

A real manifold of any sort cannot be self-subsistent. It cannot therefore be in the nature of things. It is real only within the unity. This unity must further be intelligent. For then alone can it relate, and make the manifold significant as manifold. The manifold must be *conceived* manifold. The unity on the other hand must not be capable of being conceived; it must *be* unity. If it were conceived, we could not keep it away from the manifold, or retain it as the ground of the manifold. The proper description of this unity is not that it is one, but that it is one *without a second*. This unity is only realised in the true self.

## CHAPTER XI.

### REALITY AND VALUE.

Our judgments of value are judgments about something that is or might be. They involve being. There is however a difference between the concept of value and the concept of being. The latter does not imply dualism; the concept of value does. Something has value only *for* some one. If reality were not divided into thing and person, if it were truly non-dualistic, there would be no room in it for any kind of appreciation, and therefore for value. Further, it is evident that the appreciation can only relate to a certain quality of being, and not to mere being as such. The concept of value

therefore not only assumes that there must be being and that it must be dualistic in character, but also that there must be qualities of it.

Being as such however can have no quality which can be said to give value to it. What we call "good" and what we call "bad" are equally facts; and as facts, they simply *are.* The epithets in question are only intelligible as the facts to which they are applied subserve or do not subserve certain of our ends. The concept of value is essentially teleological. Nothing can therefore be said to have value apart from any reference to ends, and the person who has those ends.

It is often argued that all value is objective, and that things have value

not because the individual thinks so, but because they embody some ideal which is over-individual and independent of the ends and purposes which the individual may want to realize. When the individual appreciates value therefore, he is forced to it by the very objectivity and independence of this ideal. He does not make value; he simply appreciates it.

It is a significant admission here that things that have value are not valuable because they are those things simply, but because they embody some ideal. There is a necessary reference in the concept of value to something which is beyond the particular thing appreciated, and in respect of which alone the thing in question has value. But can this

"something which is beyond" be objective in the sense in which the thing itself is objective? If it were, it would be just another particular fact. What sense would then be there in calling this fact an ideal, or as something in respect of which alone things have value?

The ideal may not be objective just like the thing. But it might be argued that it is nevertheless independent of the individual; for the individual does not make the ideal; he simply recognises it as such. It is pertinent however to ask, what sort of existence is recognised by the individual as the ideal? It appears evident that we can never point to a fact that is already realised in existence and say, this is our

ideal. A fact is merely a fact. It has none of that indefinableness and that "yet to be" which characterises what we call an ideal. But if an ideal is not a fact, how can it be said to exist independenly of the person who sets it up as his ideal? It appears to us that the very conception of the objectivity of the ideal is a contradiction in terms. An ideal is real only in the idea. Once this idea gets realized in actual existence, there is no room for any ideal; we are confronted instead with a fact.

But are we not making too much of the part of the individual? A thing is valuable not because it is appreciated; it is appreciated because it is valuable. An individual is more or less cons-

trained to recognise value. And when he has recognised it, he knows that he had contributed nothing personally to making the thing valuable. The objectivity of value is also proved by the practical unanimity of different individuals in respect of any particular value. It is only in a very limited number of cases that there is any real divergence of opinion among them, and the question might arise whether the value judged is not after all a purely subjective matter. But even then, no individual ever thinks that the value is all his own. He is quite convinced that the object itself is valuable, and that all he is doing is to recognise that value. The objectivity of value is therefore a fact, although we may yet have to

find a suitable theory to account for it.

Now we do not doubt the veracity of the individual when he says that he simply recognises value that already exists, and does not make it. But if this means anything, it should mean that there can be value that is unrecognised and unappreciated. Is this however true? We take instances. There is first of all aesthetic value. A picture is said to be valuable when it is aesthetically pleasing. Different persons may differ somewhat as to the exact aesthetic effect it produces, but most men will agree that it has some aesthetic value. Nevertheless, it is not difficult to see that it is of the very essence of beauty that it should be enjoyed. And

beauty that was enjoyed by no one can be beauty in no sense of the term. It would at best be a group of coloured patches disposed in space in a certain way. But the patches as such have no aesthetic value.

We take moral value. A moral value does not attach to some thing that merely exists in space outside. It is unintelligible without reference to personal freedom and the ideal the moral agent wants to realize. Something that results merely from the operation of the law of causality is not moral. Nor is that moral which does not satisfy the unconscious aspirations of the individual towards a higher and a more harmonised life. The ideal by which he is guided is not, and can never be, capable of

definition. It is of the very essence of it that it should grow as the individual approaches it nearer. What does not grow and simply confronts the individual, can only be limited like all objects; it cannot be an ideal. An ideal is a regulating idea by which the ideating subject wants to direct his conduct. If then a line of action is morally valuable only as it is the expression of the freedom of the individual and embodies some ideal which he wants to realize in life, what sort of objective value can it be supposed to have? We think the whole notion of the objectivity of value is absurd. Value is value because it is appreciated value, and not because it *is* value.

Value is not in things. The proper seat of value is the subject that

appreciates things. But what is the highest value for him? It may be some form of enjoyment or of activity. But enjoyment and activity are necessarily dependent upon the presence of some other object or being; and this implies limitation to the realization of the highest value. Also activity, (and enjoyment is included within activity), is by its very nature transient; it is conditioned by the objective which the individual has in view; and when this objective is fulfilled, there is room for activity no more. What then? Must the individual lapse into inertia and cease to aspire? Or must he start aspiring again, without end? The truth is that activity cannot be the goal of being. The goal of being is being alone.

This sounds mystic language. And yet it is not difficult to see that it expresses the inner purpose of all our efforts to realize higher and higher value. For if there is to be any end to these efforts, it must evidently be in some fully realized state of being. And being however conceived can only be being. It can in no wise be different from that natural state of ourselves when we are not after anything, and do not worry about anything. All ideas of gain and achievement are mere delusion. The self, as being, is the only natural goal of all human efforts. It is the highest value, and the only value that may be said to be of the nature of being itself.

## CHAPTER XII.

### HAPPINESS.

Reality, considered as mere "being," cannot be supposed to be in a condition that can be fitly described as "happy." Mere being can be no more than being. It is only the individual or conscious self that can be happy. But we have found reason to think that the individual is the only true form of reality, and the ground of everything that appears real. The idea of happiness is therefore necessarily related to that of being.

Things outside are cognised by the individual. But that is not all. They also bring him pleasure or pain,

satisfaction or want of satisfaction. They necessarily enter into his enjoyment of life. It may now be supposed that there might be things that are not related to his happiness. There are already things the use of which we do not know. Why can there not be things that never can form the objects of his enjoyment?

We do not deny that there are things which do not seem to give the individual any explicit happiness or unhappiness. Their presence gives him no pleasure, and their absence would give him no pain, and *vice versa*. They simply are there as facts of nature, and are cognised by him as those facts. It is however a mistake to think that what is thus cognised may purely and simply be

cognised. Our senses are not merely instruments of cognition. They are also instruments of enjoyment. And in cognising therefore we at the same time relate what is cognised to our happiness. The thing assumes for us the form of something that is to be avoided or obtained, or in any case to be adjusted to our unconscious needs. There is nothing cognised that does not involve this adjustment, and is not therefore enjoyed by us. Enjoyment is as primal a function of our being as cognition, which accounts for the common idea that the world is the result of desire.

Things are enjoyed by us. But what is the exact nature of this enjoyment? Does the enjoyment

come *from* things? In other words, is it in their nature to give joy? Let us suppose that that is so. In that case evidently they should give pleasure at all times, and in all circumstances. This however is not the case. It has to be admitted therefore that pleasure is at least partly dependent upon subjective factors, such as the condition of the body, or the interest of the individual in the thing presented for enjoyment. But this is not all. Taking both physical and mental conditions as normal, we find that in the actual act of enjoyment pleasure does not simply impress itself upon the individual from outside. The individual has not merely to become receptive and get pleasure. He has to be active in

getting it. And the activity consists just in creating a need for the thing to be enioyed. Indeed in cases of natural hunger we do not become conscious of any activity. But the mental tension is there,–we are in want. Where we are not in want, we create this want. And unless we can create it, we cannot get pleasure.

It is sometimes supposed that whether we want a sweet or not, the mere throwing of a piece of candy into the mouth is enough to give pleasure. Nothing can be farther from the truth. The throwing of a piece of candy into the mouth is not simultaneous with its enjoyment. We at once seem to question it,–and in questioning it we question the need of our body. The mere recog-

nition of the piece as a piece of candy is not the enjoyment of it as a sweet thing. The enjoyment comes only gradually, and as the need is further and further accentuated. We have to *think* in order to be really pleased with a thing. We have not simply to open wide our senses and pleasure would flow in.

We thus find that the getting of pleasure is necessarily dependent upon the presence of a need. If we did not feel the need, nothing in the object could give us any pleasure. But because we feel it, all that the object can ever do is to remove it. It cannot communicate any positive pleasure to us. In fact, things give us pleasure which in ordinary circumstances can never be imagined

to contain any pleasure-giving quality. What pleasure for example can be greater than the relief provided from the pain due to scorpion-sting? And yet the remedies employed may in normal circumstances be positively distasteful. Pleasure or enjoyment is a wholly subjective matter; it consists merely in the removal of a more or less painful condition, the condition of need or of want.

This leads us on to a further conclusion. Pleasure does not come *to* the individual. It is in a very important sense *already in him.* For if it is true that what we call pleasure consists in the removal of a want, the highest condition of well-being for the individual can only be

the condition of wantlessness and of equilibrium. This condition of wantlessness does not require any object to be enjoyed. It is not induced by anything from outside. It is the condition so to say of the self as it is, without want, and without therefore both pain and pleasure. No condition in which the individual *might be* can be more pleasurable. For all so called pleasure is in essence pain. It implies want. And when this want is filled up so to say, there is no new accretion to being, but merely a return to the equilibrium of the self again. The self as it is, is therefore the completion of our desires for happiness and well-being. The images of joy that so often lure our hearts are without exception

images of implied wants. They please because we do not know the joy of wantlessness, and do not realize that *all* pleasure in the end is a return to the condition of wantlessness and of equilibrium.

This wantless condition of the self or the so-called peace of the self is very often likened to the peace of a stone. It is argued that the stone knows neither pain nor pleasure. If the self also is beyond both, how is it different from a stone? It is a condition which however we may glorify will satisfy no one.

The stone indeed knows neither pain nor pleasure. But neither can we say that it is in a state of equilibrium or of peace. It lacks intelli-

gent being, and therefore lacks the very capacity for pleasure and pain. The self is not a stone. It has intelligent being. The question is, what joy is natural to it as that being?

It is not difficult to realize that what is intelligent *must be* in a condition that can only fitly be described in terms denoting well-being or otherwise. The principle of joy is so to say co-extensive with that of intelligence. We cannot think awa from what is intelligent the "cond tion of being" that may be calle satisfactory or unsatisfactory. Thi condition for the self, we have seen, is not some form of enjoyment that appears to be derived from objects outside. Joy is in the very nature of the self. It remains when all interest

in things outside disappears. In fact, it is the fulfillment of all those interests. For no condition can be happier than the condition of wantlessness, and of "satisfaction in the self." It is the supreme peace, which is the goal of all human effort.